BP NORTH AMERICA

Moderator: Rob Wyman
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4:45 p.m. CT

Operator: Good evening. My name is (Christian), and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the Deep Water Horizon Response Press Briefing. All audio lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After the speaker's brief remarks, there will be a question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question over the audio, simply press star followed by the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press the pound key. We ask that you please limit yourselves to one question per person. I will now turn the call over to our host, Mr. Rob Wyman. Sir, you may begin.

Rob Wyman: Thank you, and good day, everybody. I'm Lieutenant Commander Rob Wyman, chief of the joint information center here at the unified area command in Robert, Louisiana. Thank you for attending today's press conference. With us today is Rear Admiral Mary Landry, L-A-N-D-R-Y. She's the federal on-scene coordinator. We also have Mr. Mike Saucier, S-A-U-C-I-E-R. He is MMS's regional supervisor for field operations. Mr. Doug Suttles, S-U-T-T-L-E-S is BP's chief operating officer.

We'll begin today with opening remarks, followed by questions from the members of the media here in the audience, and then we'll open up the phone lines to take questions from those that dialed in. If you would, please silence your cell phones or turn them off. Raise you hand so that we can bring you

the microphone to capture the audio. Please provide name and affiliation, and we will have time for (follow-ups) today. Thank you.

Operator: And again, if you would like to ask a question, simply press star one.

Mary Landry: Good afternoon, everyone. I just returned from a meeting in Grand Isle. President Obama and Admiral Allen, the national incident commander, were touring the area. Attending the meeting were also Senators Vitter and Landrieu, as well as Congressman Melancon and parish president, and we also had the governors from the other Gulf Coast states.

This was a great meeting, where everybody sat down and discussed the challenges we face, and now as we address the largest spill in U.S. history, we are all committed to working together to meet this challenge. Obviously from day one, Admiral Allen and the President have been involved, as well as the other cabinet members and every agency of government – federal, state, local agencies, and the private sector – have been represented in this response.

And as we work together, it was the commitment to make sure we could meet this challenge and not let this oil spill defeat us. The Gulf Coast is a precious ecosystem. It's absolutely critical that we fight this as far offshore as possible – you know, secure the source, fight it as far offshore as possible, mitigate the impact to our shoreline, and certainly minimize the economic impact.

A lot of people had discussions today about the challenges we face. This coastal region is fragile. The people have been through lots of hurricanes. They were just turning the corner in Louisiana, and now they're dealing with this. But it was great – it was a great inspiration to me to see that everybody could sit down.

We had Governor Jindal there, we had all the parish presidents – everyone could sit down at the table and really discuss the way ahead – how we're going to continue to fight this fight and how we're going to work collectively on behalf of the nation, because these resources that are at risk are absolutely the nation's resources.

I know you're all very eager to hear about top kill, and I'm going to turn it over to Doug Suttles.

Doug Suttles: Thanks, Admiral Landry. To start off with, just (to) talk about our top kill operation, the – probably the most important point to make is that it continues. It's underway. It will continue on, likely for another 24 or even 48-hour period. We've had periods of pumping, followed by periods of monitoring.

We have used our junk shot manifold and other loss control material – and I think, as we've stated before, we'll continue with this operation until such time as it's either successful or we believe that it won't be successful. I think the key element here is to exercise patience and – excuse me – to recognize that as you monitor the video feeds from the remote vehicles from the robotic submarine, that it's very, very difficult to interpret those images as a sign if progress or anything else. So I'd just stress that this job remains underway. It's likely to remain underway for up to another 48-hour period – 24 to 48-hour period – and we'll continue to keep you updated on a regular basis.

On the rest of our activity that we're fighting this spill, as the Admiral has just stated, offshore and onshore – I just actually got back from about three hours flying the coastline and actually flying over the well location. I've done this many, many times now, and I can tell you that the battle offshore – we're winning that battle.

Our efforts to skim the oil – yesterday we skimmed 7,200 barrels of oily water mix. We had 13 burns – we continued with our sub sea dispersant (through the) activity, and as I think you've heard, we have over 1,300 vessels fighting this – fighting this fight. And it's the least amount of oil I've seen offshore since my very first flight, so I'm very, very pleased with the activity of the offshore team, and we'll continue that. We'll continue it as long as we have to continue that.

I would also mention that our onshore activities or near shore activities continue as well. Over the last 24 hours or so, we've moved 192,000 feet of boom into the state of Louisiana. About 100,000 of that was actually moved

from neighboring states, and about 80,000 feet of that was new deliveries. We continue to get new deliveries and have about a million more feet on the way.

We continue to modify our techniques to attack this oil as it comes ashore. As we speak here now, we have 10 locations in total that have been oiled. We've – are now deploying these (forward) operating bases. These are (placed) – so if you get people closer to the locations where the oil is, so we minimize the amount of time it takes for the teams to get to the field location and maximize the time at the cleanup sites.

This includes a total of six floatels, which roughly hold 300 people each – (who) will be staging closer to the action. I think with that, I'll just stop and happy to take your questions.

Male: Hi. David Mattingly from CNN. We got this from the Jefferson County Parrish – an elected official there, who said that as soon as the President left, all but a dozen workers had – that were there, that BP brought in this morning, had left the beach. He says that BP shipped in about 3 or 400 workers this morning about 7:30 am, and that as soon as the President left, all of those workers left except for about a dozen. Could you comment on that? What was BP trying to accomplish, and what was going on there.

Doug Suttles: Well, I think you should first recognize that I think as the President and Admiral Allen and many have said, we've moved in considerably more people to fight this battle or – on the locations where the oil is. We should also recognize that these individuals are working out in the heat of the sun. These are long days. They start early in the morning, and they stop in the evenings.

So the fact that they were leaving the location late in the afternoon is not unusual. It's not associated with the President arriving. I can actually tell you that the locations I overflew today – and I overflew all of them except for where the President was, because the air space was closed, and I also had a reporter from the AP with me, who actually saw that on every location where we saw oil, we saw people working on that oil.

So what you saw was – is us getting people out to the locations where the oil is and cleaning it up as fast as we can. And we're going to continue to

enhance those efforts. Both ourselves and the Coast Guard have expanded the number of people just in this past week that are fighting the spill.

David Mattingly: Did they finish their job there? Is that why they left?

Doug Suttles: No, the job isn't finished at Grand Isle. The cleanup is not complete yet. So no, they'll be back again tomorrow, and they'll be back again every day, until all the oil's collected.

David Mattingly: In the same numbers?

Doug Suttles: I would expect so. I would – we actually – the Admiral and I every single morning get a report which shows every one of the 10 locations and what equipment, resources, and people are on each of those locations. So we look at that every single day.

Mary Landry: And I just want to add (inaudible), the President was also emphasizing more rigorous federal oversight of the spill response, just so – to show everyone of the role of the federal on-scene coordinator of Admiral Allen as the national incident commander, and we've doubled and tripled our oversight.

We also are going to flatten out the organization, and we think more to the tip of the (sphere), that we can be right where the – right at the front lines, where this oil is coming ashore. And as you know, they are very remote areas. But we're working the logistics to make sure we can be there for proper oversight of the response.

So I think if – the people of Louisiana should be confident, as well as the rest of the people of the Gulf Coast states, that we will be there with the appropriate federal oversight of this response.

Male: (Next question).

Female: Hi. (Inaudible) News. (Inaudible) to ask you about this report that the top kill (inaudible) has been halted again, and (inaudible) has it halted? (Inaudible) clarification on that.

Doug Suttles: Well, I think it's important to note that part of the – this top kill job is we'll (pump mud) – we'll have periods where we're pumping. We'll have periods where we're monitoring the results of that pumpint. We'll have periods where we actually pump in this – what we call junk.

It's more sophisticated than it sounds, but this – these material – everything from hard rubber balls and metal elements to shredded material to fibrous material, to try to slow down the amount of mud that goes out the top of the riser. And then we'll have periods of pumping again. So that fact that we stop for periods of time and start again is not unusual. It's part of a dynamic kill or this top kill operation.

Female: And are you measuring the pressure every time you stop it? (Inaudible)

Doug Suttles: Well – there is pressure data gathered continuously, and I – right now, I probably couldn't answer that question about making it public, because you can imagine – this job – the individuals pumping this job – the people are actually – went out to the site today. The people in these vessels running this equipment – the main purpose at the moment is executing this job as well as we can.

I think we have stressed that the equipment's working extraordinarily well, both on the surface and the subsurface. And we don't want to do anything that's going to distract them from being successful, because stopping the flow is what matters the most.

Male: (Inaudible) with the Associated Press. In this report by the "New York Times," there's a – there's a quote that says, "We're disappointed by the progress of the top kill and that the junk shot was done early this morning and it didn't seem to make much difference."
Can you respond to that disappointment that's being expressed over the progress of this?

Doug Suttles: Yes, I'm not – I'm not sure who would have expressed that. I think yesterday when we – when we spoke to – I talked about this being a bit like a roller coaster. You know, a – this is a long job, it's got many phases to it, and we're going to stay with it as long as we think we can be successful. So I think all

of us are trying to do as much as we can to just be patient and actually wait and see what the results are, because the small indicators that we (marquee) at one moment to the next to take and stand on different paths. I think what we need to do is finish the job. And as I said, we're going to stay at this as long as we think it could to be successful.

It's going basically according to plan. The actions so far are not that unusual for this type of operation and we have a very, very large amount of equipment and materials onsite and those can be replaced, and we can do this for a long time if required.

Male: Do you have any idea of whether the junk shot did any good?

Male: Well, we have fired the various elements of junk and continue to do that and we believe that is something to some degree, but it's very, very difficult to interpret each of those (spaces), because this is a combination of pumping at (very ledge), monitoring the well and applying this junk material. And we can be, as I said, we can be doing this for another 24 to 48 hours.

Male: Any other questions?

Male: About almost 40, 45 minutes late this afternoon, there was some well fluctuation in the plume. Can you maybe give us an idea of what was going on at that time? And, are you pumping mud right now?

Male: I actually – actually I wasn't watching the plume over the last 45 minutes. I couldn't come in. I – just very recently got back from my hover flights so I haven't been actually watching the video.

But I can tell you that while we're pumping the job in the (varying range) that large amount of mud can come out at the end of riser and this material is a lot like a sediment so it's cloudy and it obscures the view. And that can come and go as the job varies in the way it's – it's performed. So I wouldn't interpret anything – anything from those actions.

And I couldn't tell you right this minute whether we're pumping. We have been pumping. We have that periods of monitoring, but I actually don't know right now, this moment what we're actually doing.

Male: Any other follow-up?

Female: Right. It does seem like the timeline is moving a little bit. We were 24 hours, 48, everyday we kind of think about from 24 to 48 and we're looking at it about a four day (window) you're talking about this, and it sounds like it's not something that we can rely on was due to the fact that (inaudible) your confidence with this (often).

Male: Yes. I can fully appreciate that comment. But the nature of a job like this and in fact the nature of this whole operation since it began, since we started – ever since we have the (fired) explosion and the rig (sank), the flow was discovered.

We're doing things that are very difficult to do. They're on the bottom of the seabed and you can't imagine we're looking at a particular job and think we can even perform it in three hours, sometimes it takes four. Some of the jobs that we think we can do in half a day take a day because we're using these robotic submarines. People can't go down there and do this.

And many of the things we've done have never been done before. So the engineers make their best estimate. But the thing we tell them consistently is do the job right. This job is a very critical operation. If it takes longer, we'll let it take long. We're not going to rush it because it's too important.

And as long as we believe it will work, we'll stay with it. We don't have a set timeline that say if we haven't achieved a certain thing in 24 hours we're going to quit. That's not the way we look at this operation.

So as long as we believe it can be successful, we'll continue to go. The fact that it stopped and started is not that unusual. The fact that we've taken periods to monitor the well is not unusual. And the fact that we've applied this material, this junk shot type material is not unusual as well.

I realize it's frustrating, but I think the message here is this thing is moving along. It will continue to move along and we're going to stay at this as long as we need to.

Female: I think you want to also mention the diagnostics I think that understand the Secretary Chu, the Department of Energy, members of the (inaudible) and the Interior, the Coast Guard are in the Command Center in Houston watching this full time right on the side of the industry, so there's no attempt to be fully forth – no intent to not be fully forthright you about what's going on.

We even get instructions that (inaudible) if anything changes like the (inaudible) and people have watched all night. But for those who are trying to get a few hours of sleep wake us up if anything significant happen, so that we can tell the press and tell everybody that something significant has happened, so we – we will be fully forthright with you about what's going on.

Male: Question (inaudible).

Male: This is like (it was) a very simple question. But you think that you're able to stop the flow of oil when you're pumping this mud. If the top kill fails, could you continue to pump the mud and keep the oil from coming up? If so for how long?

Male: (Well), it actually isn't a silly question, I mean. But if this doesn't work, the next step we'll do – because we think it's a more effective way to do it is we'll equip this what we call Lower Marine Riser Package cap on and we have several versions of that sitting here waiting to go.

And then the next step after that will be looking at putting a second BOP on top of the existing BOP. We think those are probably the next – the best next step things to do as opposed to try to hold the flow back of mud continuously.

Male: OK. But the LMRP, the promises with that is that it only going to stop some or most of – or collect some or most of the oil. But you're saying you're stopping all of the oil during the pumping, right?

Male: Well, it's hard to know precisely (but that's you're all) clearly – clearly while we're pumping it should be stopping most if not all of the oil. It's – you could and actually continue that operation indefinitely if until the relief well is finished.

So the best thing to do is actually put the cap on and capture the flow while we prepare for the next operation to stop the flow. So that's the order we've laid out. That's the order actually we work with the Coast Guard, MMS Sector 2 as (inaudible) mentioned. It's actually been in the command center in Houston actually since this job began and watched it very, very closely along with other members of the government as well as our own team.

Male: Operator, at this time, we like to go from the lines for question.

Operator: Certainly. Our first question comes from (Anthony Guegel) with Upstream.

(Anthony Guegel): Yes. I understand the Development Driller II has suspended drilling of the second relief well. I was curios to know why that is, what it may be doing.

And if it is involved with the parallel options of perhaps readying its BOP for deployment over the existing BOP, can we take that as an indication that perhaps the expectation for success of the top kill is diminishing as time goes on?

Male: Well, the first part of your question is yes, the Development Driller II has suspended work on the second relief well while it prepares its BOP as the option for stopping the flow. We actually started that well before this job started so we shouldn't read that as any indication of anything about the top kill job.

What we wanted to do is be fully prepare if the top kill didn't work to be able to move straight to the LMRP cap and then follow that with the BOP, our BOP option. And that should the Development Driller II is preparing to be able to do that if that's the direction we choose to go, because we don't want any unnecessary delays.

I should have said the Development Drillers III continues with its drilling. It's at 11,000 feet now and continues to make good progress out there slightly better than it's planned.

Male: Next question.

Operator: Our next question comes from Osha Davidson with Phoenix Sun.

Osha Davidson: Hi. I noticed that – I think it was in "Good Morning, America" earlier today that you had apologized to the American people for not relaying information fast enough on whether – on the fact that the pumping can actually stop the date, the night before and nobody was informed of that. We've been told several times that there was 20,000 BP workers there. It seems that odd that nobody's able to convey that information and your update on your site continues to say everything's going fine when we've seen several times that things haven't been going fine you say it's a dynamic situation but my basic question is why should anyone believe you at this point when things that you've been saying you've been misleading us all along.

Male: Well if you just look at the course of today I think that our CEO Tony Hayward was on the morning news programs and gave an update first thing this morning. (Bob Dudley) one of our board members was on television just earlier this afternoon giving an update. We're giving you an update now, so I do believe we've improved the frequency since yesterday.

This is the third update we've provided today, we try to.

Male: Information itself is not anymore forthcoming; you said you weren't able to comment on the plume because you didn't personally see it. So I mean really, you've got 20,000 people they couldn't, they didn't tell you what happened. None of this makes very much sense to a lot of viewers.

Male: Yes I think the point on the, the point on the plume is, is that it was actually watching the plume is not an indication of how the job is going. In fact you yourself can watch the plume as well as everyone else can the fact that – so I think that the point about the plume is that you just to recognize that watching

the plume and what's coming out isn't an indication of either success or failure of the jobs.

So we try to caution people all along about that and we continue to make those
(cautions). We're trying to provide as much data as we can, we're in the middle of this operation. It actually, the various elements are driven by the results of the step before. That's the way it works, as we've stressed the government is in watching with the job, they're part of the decision making on every step of the job.

So there's a tremendous amount of transparency here. I realize people would like to know every single moment of everything happening.

Male: (Important facts or) we'd like to know those.

Male: Yes well we're doing our best to provide those, as I said the job continues, it will continue as long as we think it'll be successful. At times we will (pump) at other times we'll monitor the well, at other times we'll (ease) these materials to try to block up the flow.

And we'll – as the Admiral's already stated we'll give you updates regularly and if something significant occurs we'll make sure that's available as soon as it happens.

Male: Operator

Female: Can I.

Male: Move to the next question please.

Female: I just wanted, can I add one more thing? Because when you said (inaudible) and I (did see) something on the morning news showing the – it links back to the research vessel that had come back in and (then) discovered, had gotten some data that shows that the subsurface plume moving toward the Gulf Coast. I want to reassure all of you and I promised the governors of the Gulf Coast I would do this, that all the beaches are open with the exception of three

in Louisiana. And that we are absolutely working with the research, the University of Florida and the research vessels to reassure folks we actually are getting half of the samples off that vessel to show you how clear the water is.

You can have (hydrocarbon) readings hat are very low that will produce a plume on their vessel but actually its not, its not the huge amount of submerged oil (a) wave of oil that's going to come ashore on the Gulf Coast. So we're really trying to work the (places to stay) offshore as possible.

So thank you for reminding me about the plume even though it's a bit different from what you're talking about.

Male: Next question.

Operator: Our next question comes from the line of (Chad Powell) with (GWRA).

(Chad Powell): Hey good afternoon, I'd like to switch gears and ask about some of the efforts on wildlife. We've taken part in a couple of news conferences where you've had wildlife specialists speaking. And they express some frustration about the numbers of wildlife that you know probably never know about that are not you know washed up on shore. They're going to be out in the Gulf and up against the booms.

The question is what instructions with 1,300 boats out there what instructions do they have if they're working on booms when the encounter injured or distressed wildlife or deceased wildlife.

Female: That's a great question and we actually have a remarkable network of wildlife rehabilitation folks involved. Theirs federal agency, state agencies (and) the private sector throughout the Gulf Coast region. And there was a report yesterday they covered it both – someone was told he wasn't supposed to report the number of birds and actually he was given correction as to the number of wildlife how many were oil versus how many were in some other distress.

There's necropsies being done on all these animals, there's reports and data being collected and there's there has to be full understanding of the impact

this has on all species and all manner of wildlife. That's part of this response process. So it is being done.

And I believe there are Web sites that are communicating to you the status of all of the, you know how many are brought in for treatment, how many, how many come in oiled versus it could be other stress and how many are released, how many are deceased and then they will be able to eventually normalize the data for what is the naturally occurring loss of wildlife in any given year versus what happened this year as a result of this oil spill and that will all be part of what's called the Natural Resource Damage Assessment.

And then BP will be responsible to make these species whole and that is all part of this process so as we mentioned before long after everybody's attention is gone from this spill there will be a lot of work done to make sure we make this region whole.

(Chad Powell): The question, the question is though what instructions have they been given if they encounter wildlife, do they document it, do they retrieve it and turn it in somewhere, what do they actually do.

Female: The workers are not supposed to handle wildlife unless their trained, unless their specifically trained. And I think what we can do for you is make sure we have those instructions on our Web site but maybe we need to push it out, go on some radio stations and stuff. If you could get a hold of our folks after this call (or join) information center and give us suggestions for how you think we can better communicate for everybody.

Especially its Memorial Day weekend a lot of people are going to be out there, they're going to want to help. And we have trained volunteers, we have trained wildlife specialists but we, it's probably a good idea to let the average American know what they should do.

Male: Operator next question and further ground rules if you would please (add) that after the question is asked.

Operator: Our next question comes from Carol Rosenberg with Miami Herald.

Carol Rosenberg: Can you hear me, can you hear me?

Female: Yes we can hear you.

Carol Rosenberg: OK, just a bit of bookkeeping are we going to get a Memorial Day weekend update on this thing and then I'm sorry if I didn't hear it earlier but how much mud was pumped (since you resumed) last night and how many of these (junk shots) and how much volume (was) that?

Mike Saucier: Well the first part of your question we'll continue to provide both through these press events, through these special speaker sessions that have been referred to earlier and through the Web site (to be dated) through the weekend. Unfortunately those of us here won't be able to take the holiday off, we'll continue to fight this event.

I don't have the exact numbers of the volume of mud pump or the exact amount of this junk that was pumped. What I can tell you is we have very large amount of material and we can replenish that on a regular basis.

So those won't be restrictions on the job we can essentially continue to replenish this operation as long as we need to perform it.

Male: Operator, we have time for two more callers.

Operator: Understood, our next question comes from Kristen Hays with Reuters.

Kristen Hays: Hi gentlemen can you hear me?

Mike Saucier: Yes.

Kristen Hays: OK I've got two questions, you said during yesterday's call that you would restart pumping on Thursday night, which you did with the (junk shot) have you begun pumping mud again and if not when will you restart and I have a follow-up.

Female: (You might want to give a couple of).

Mike Saucier: Yes so we, we've since we've last spoken we've actually done all of the operations I've described. We've actually pumped, we've actually used the (junk shot) material and (loss circulation) material and we've monitored the well. And we're doing that as we, as the job indicates it needs to. So those operations have all continued.

I think the other thing to note is we have several different types of mud on location. We have different densities, we have from lighter to heavier and the team that's actually forming the job based on the response they see from the well. They determine which of those densities to use. So they have a number of options available to them. And they'll continue to monitor the activity and adjust their plan according to what they observe.

I think she had a follow-up as well.

Male: That's fine.

Operator: Our next question comes from Bettina Boxall with Los Angeles Times.

Bettina Boxall: Mr. Saucier could you please give an idea of how much or how deep the drilling might have gone down into the actual well bore and what percentage of the well bore is being filled with filling mud in terms of the diameter.

Mike Saucier: Unfortunately we don't, we can't from what we see we can't actually determine how deep in the well bore the mud has gone. So I can't actually tell you that. And of course what we're actually doing when we pump at these very high rates is some of the mud clearly comes out the end of the riser and some of it will go down the well bore. We don't know the exact split because we actually can't monitor or measure those amounts.

But this is why we do things like pump the material, vary the pumping rate and vary the density of the mud that we're pumping. So and we, as I said we'll continue this operation as long as necessary until we're either successful with it or to work (inaudible) succeed.

Male: That concludes today's press conference. The video will be available via the Web site and the imagery of (Noah's new Gulf) forecast has also been uploaded to the Web site. Thank you.

Operator: Again ladies and gentlemen this does conclude today's Deep Water Horizon Response press briefing. You may now disconnect your line.

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